

STEREO SPEAKERS OF THE YEAR UNDER \$2500

B&W 705 \$2499

The B&W 705 was the winner of our group test in our last issue where we put it up against some very stiff competition. The 705 is a large standmount two-way using high quality proprietary drivers: a Nautilus-inspired 25mm tweeter and a B&W trademark woven Kevlar 165mm midrange/bass driver.

B&W quotes a frequency response of 46Hz-25kHz at ± 3 dB, with sensitivity at an above-average 89dB/W/m and impedance of eight ohms. The 705 measures 421 x 222 x 319mm (hwd) and weighs 9.5kg. Good quality gold-plated biwireable speaker binding posts are provided.

The enclosure is a strong point of the 705, being beautifully styled and finished in a choice of real-wood veneers. What's more, it feels substantial in weight and is solid as a rock when given the old knuckle knock.

The 705's sound proved highly impressive for its size. It had a solid bass register that was quick, punchy, extremely detailed, and dynamic. In fact, overall dynamics were stunning throughout the frequency spectrum. Probably a testament to the inert enclosure, the B&W had an extraordinarily

uncoloured and neutral midrange. This level of mid-band neutrality made the 705 seem totally transparent to the musical signal being fed into it. And the accuracy and neutrality also continued into the tweeter's domain. The Nautilus-derived tweeter did a superb job of separating different treble sounds, so cymbals, wind chimes and the like were reproduced with lifelike clarity, realistic harmonics and decay.

The same could be said about the Kevlar driver's way with the midrange. The light and stiff driver is lightning fast, making transient attack on acoustic guitar, for example, very snappy, and heightening the sense of reality. Speech intelligibility in our television tests was spot on, too.

The B&W 705 speakers impressed with their surprisingly robust bass and fast and resolved midrange. The tweeter's resolution was also a stand-out, as was its delicacy with detail and harmonics.

The Bowers & Wilkins 705 loudspeakers are super little performers packaged in a variety of gorgeous real-wood veneers, and superbly assembled.

More info: www.e-hifi.com.au

